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Advancement of women

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Hassan Kassem **Najem** (Lebanon)

I. Introduction

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "Advancement of women" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee considered the item jointly with item 104 at its 12th to 17th meetings, on 14, 15, 16 and 19 October 1998, and took action on the item at its 22nd and 29th meetings, on 22 and 30 October 1998. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/53/SR.12–17 and 22 and 29).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its eighteenth and nineteenth sessions;[1]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/53/318);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women (A/53/354);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/53/376);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on trafficking in women and girls (A/53/409);

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1).

(f) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (A/53/363);

(g) Letter dated 23 February 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final communiqué of the eighth session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held at Tehran from 9 to 11 December 1997 (A/53/72–S/1998/156);

(h) Letter dated 13 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly, transmitting the Santiago Consensus, adopted by the Governments of the Latin American and Caribbean countries at the seventh session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, held at Santiago from 19 to 21 November 1997 (A/53/87);

(i) Letter dated 8 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final communiqué of the twenty-fifth session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Doha from 15 to 17 March 1998 (A/53/95–S/1998/311);

(j) Letter dated 6 July 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/167);

(k) Note verbale dated 28 July 1998 from the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/203);

(l) Letter dated 30 September 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/53/447 and Corr.1).

4. At the 12th meeting, on 14 October, introductory statements were made by the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, and the Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (see A/C.3/53/SR.12).

5. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (see A/C.3/53/SR.12).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.10

6. At the 22nd meeting, on 22 October, the representative of the Philippines, on behalf of *Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus,* the *Czech Republic, Denmark,* the *Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Monaco, Mongolia, Namibia,* the *Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru,* the *Philippines, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan,* the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ukraine,* the *United States of America, Uruguay*and *Viet Nam*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Traffic in women and girls" (A/C.3/53/L.10). Subsequently, the *Bahamas, Chile, Croatia, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea,*

the *Gambia, Hungary, India, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Thailand, Uganda* and *Zambia* joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

7. At its 29th meeting, on 30 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.10 without a vote (see para. 18, draft resolution I).

B. Draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.11

8. At the 22nd meeting, on 22 October, the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of *Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde,* the *Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia,* the *Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus,* the *Czech Republic,* the *Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark,* the *Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Myanmar, Namibia,* the *Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama,* the *Philippines, Portugal,* the *Republic of Korea,* the *Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Senegal, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine,* the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,* the *United States of America, Venezuela, Zambia* and *Zimbabwe*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls" (A/C.3/53/L.11). Subsequently, *Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Benin, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Guyana, India, Latvia, Madagascar, Poland, Swaziland, Thailand* and *Uruguay* joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

9. In introducing the draft resolution, the representative of the Netherlands corrected the text by inserting, in operative paragraph 3 (c), the words "*inter alia*," before the words "through appropriate measures".

10. At its 29th meeting, on 30 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.11, as corrected, without a vote (see para. 18, draft resolution II).

C. Draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.12 and Rev.1

11. At the 22nd meeting, on 22 October, the representative of Norway, on behalf of *Argentina, Bolivia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Mongolia, Norway, Panama,* the *Philippines, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain* and *Sweden*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" (A/C.3/53/L.12), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 51/68 of 12 December 1996,

"*Bearing in mind* that one of the purposes of the United Nations, as stated in Articles 1 and 55 of the Charter, is to promote universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind, including distinction as to sex,

"*Affirming* that women and men should participate equally in social, economic and political development, should contribute equally to such development and should share equally in improved conditions of life,

"*Recalling* the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[2] in which the Conference reaffirmed that the human rights of women and the girl child were an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights,

"*Welcoming* the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fortieth,[3] forty-first[4] and forty-second[5] sessions regarding the implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action,[6] as well as agreed conclusions 1997/2 of the Economic and Social Council[7] on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, as well as Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/26 of 28 July 1998, entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development",

"*Welcoming* the growing number of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[8] which now stands at one hundred and sixty-two,

"*Having considered* the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its eighteenth and nineteenth sessions,[9]

"*Expressing concern* at the great number of reports overdue and that continue to be overdue, in particular initial reports, which constitute an obstacle to the full implementation of the Convention,

"1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;[10]

"2. *Urges* all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible, so that universal ratification of the Convention can be achieved by the year 2000;

"3. *Emphasizes* the importance of full compliance by States parties with their obligations under the Convention;

"4. *Urges* States to limit the extent of any reservations they lodge to the Convention, to formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible, to ensure that no reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention or otherwise incompatible with international treaty law, to review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them and to withdraw

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[2] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[3] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 6* (E/1996/26), chap. I, sect. C.1.

[4] Ibid., *1997, Supplement No. 7* (E/1997/27), chap. I, sect. C.1.

[5] Ibid., *1998, Supplement No. 7* (E/1998/27), chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution IV.

[6] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[7] A/52/3, chap. IV, sect. A.

[8] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1).

[10] A/53/318.

reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention or that are otherwise incompatible with international treaty law;

"5. *Invites* States parties to the Convention to give due consideration to the statement regarding reservations to the Convention adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;[11]

"6. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretariat on reservations to the Convention;[12]

"7. *Urges* States parties to the Convention to make all possible efforts to submit their reports on the implementation of the Convention in accordance with article 18 thereof and with the guidelines provided by the Committee, and to cooperate fully with the Committee in the presentation of their reports;

"8. *Encourages* the Secretariat to extend technical assistance to States parties, upon their request, in the preparation of reports, in particular initial reports, and invites Governments to contribute to those efforts;

"9. *Commends* the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for reducing the backlog of reports, *inter alia*, through improved methods of work;

"10. *Urges* States parties to the Convention to take appropriate measures so that acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention by a two-thirds majority of States parties can be reached as soon as possible in order for the amendment to enter into force;

"11. *Appreciates* the additional meeting time allowing the Committee to hold two sessions annually, each of three weeks' duration, preceded by a pre-session working group of the Committee;

"12. *Emphasizes* the need to ensure adequate financing and staff support for the effective functioning of the Committee, including for the dissemination of information;

"13. *Welcomes* the progress made by the Open-ended Working Group of the Commission on the Status of Women on the Elaboration of a Draft Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and encourages the Working Group to continue its work with a view to completing it at the forty-third session of the Commission;

"14. *Encourages* the strengthening of coordination between the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the other human rights treaty bodies, and encourages the human rights treaty bodies to coordinate their activities in monitoring the implementation of human rights instruments for the full enjoyment by women of their human rights;

"15. *Invites* the Committee to draw up joint general comments with other treaty bodies, within their respective mandates, on the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights, and invites the persons chairing

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[11] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1), part two, chap. I, sect. A.

[12] CEDAW/C/1997/4.

the human rights treaty bodies, at their annual meetings, to explore ways and means to facilitate those activities;

"16. *Stresses* that a comprehensive and integrated approach to the promotion and protection of the human rights of women, including the integration of the human rights of women into the mainstream of United Nations system-wide activities, requires systematic, increased and sustained attention to and implementation of the general recommendations of the Committee, at the request of the General Assembly, throughout the United Nations system;

"17. *Welcomes* the cooperation of the Committee with United Nations programmes and agencies, as well as with the non-governmental organization community, and encourages further activities, *inter alia*, regarding dissemination of information on the Convention;

"18. *Commends* the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and others for building women's capacity to understand and use human rights instruments, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

"19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session a report on the status of the Convention and the implementation of the present resolution, under the appropriate agenda item."

12. Subsequently, *Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana,* the *Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia,* the *Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, France, Greece, Hungary, Malawi, Mali, Portugal, Rwanda, South Africa, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Venezuela* and *Zambia* joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

13. At its twenty-ninth meeting, on 30 October, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" (A/C.3/53/L.12/Rev.1), submitted by the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.12 and by *Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Burundi, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Namibia,* the *Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Romania, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey* and the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.* Subsequently, *Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cape Verde,* the *Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus,* the *Dominican Republic, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Poland,* the *Republic of Moldova, Thailand* and *Uganda* joined in sponsoring the revised draft resolution.

14. At the same meeting, the representative of Norway orally revised the draft resolution by replacing, in operative paragraph 10, the words "invites the Committee to continue its efforts to improve its internal methods of work" with the words "notes the efforts of the Committee to continue improving its internal methods of work".

15. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.12/Rev.1, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 18, draft resolution III).

D. Draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.13

16. At the 22nd meeting, on 22 October, the representative of Australia, on behalf of *Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria,* the *Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Côte*

d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the *Czech Republic,* the *Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark,* the *Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mongolia, Namibia,* the *Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay,* the *Philippines, Portugal,* the *Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Turkmenistan,* the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland* and *Viet Nam*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat" (A/C.3/53/L.13). Subsequently, *Bangladesh, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Cape Verde,* the *Central African Republic,* the *Congo,* the *Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Fiji, Guatemala, Guinea, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta,* the *Marshall Islands,* the *Federated States of Micronesia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Poland,* the *Republic of Moldova, Samoa, Singapore,* the *Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia,* the *United Republic of Tanzania,* the *United States of America, Yemen* and *Zambia* joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

17. At its 29th meeting, on 30 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.13 without a vote (see para. 18, draft resolution IV).

III. Recommendations of the Third Committee

18. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I

Traffic in women and girls

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the principles set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[13] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[14] the International Covenants on Human Rights,[15] the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,[16] the Convention on the Rights of the Child[17] and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, [18]

Recalling the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others,[19]

Reaffirming the provisions of the outcome of the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993,[20] the International Conference on Population and

[13] Resolution 217 A (III).

[14] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[15] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[16] Resolution 39/46, annex.

[17] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[18] Resolution 48/104.

[19] Resolution 317 (IV).

[20] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

Development,[21] the World Summit for Social Development, [22]the Fourth World Conference on Women[23] and the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Cairo from 29 April to 8 May 1995,[24] pertaining to the traffic in women and girls,

*Recalling*its resolution 52/98 of 12 December 1997 on traffic in women and girls,

Welcoming the inclusion of gender-related crimes in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

Also recalling the agreed conclusions on violence against women adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session,[25] and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/30 of 17 April 1998,[26] the recommendations of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery adopted by the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities at its fiftieth session, in August 1998, and resolutions adopted by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice relating to trafficking in women and girls,

Noting the decision of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its seventh session[27] that the ad hoc committee on the elaboration of a comprehensive international convention against transnational organized crime, to be established by the General Assembly, would discuss, *inter alia*, the elaboration of an international instrument addressing trafficking in women and children,

*Reaffirming*that sexual violence and trafficking of women and girls for purposes of economic exploitation, sexual exploitation through prostitution, and other forms of sexual exploitation and contemporary forms of slavery are serious violations of human rights,

Noting with concern the increasing number of women and girl children from developing countries and from some countries with economies in transition who are being trafficked to developed countries as well as within and between regions and States, and acknowledging that the problem of trafficking also includes the victimizing of young boys,

*Welcoming*bilateral and regional cooperation mechanisms and initiatives to address the problem of trafficking in women and girls, and noting the proposed draft convention on preventing and combating trafficking in women and children for the purposes of prostitution of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation,

Underlining the importance of systematic data collection to determine the extent and nature of the problem of trafficking in women and girls,

Emphasizing the need for more sustained and coordinated national, subregional, regional, interregional and international action to combat trafficking in women and girls,

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[21] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[22] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[23] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[24] See A/CONF.169/16.

[25] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/1998/27 and Corr.1), chap. I.

[26] Ibid., *Supplement No. 3* (E/1998/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[27] Ibid., *Supplement No. 10* (E/1998/30).

Deeply concerned about the unabated use of new information technologies, including the Internet, for purposes of prostitution, child pornography, paedophilia, trafficking in women as brides, and sex tourism,

Stressing once again the need for Governments to provide standard humanitarian treatment to trafficked persons consistent with human rights standards,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the traffic in women and girls;[28]

2. *Welcomes* national, regional and international efforts to implement the recommendation of the World Congress against Commercial and Sexual Exploitation of Children,[29] and calls upon Governments to take further measures in that regard;

3. *Urges* Governments to continue their efforts to implement the provisions on trafficking in women and girls contained in the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women[30] and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights;

4. *Encourages* Governments to intensify their efforts to implement the policy recommendations and strategies on trafficking in women and girls contained in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, in particular the Programme of Action for the Prevention of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others[31] adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-second session, taking into account the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women in her reports to the Commission at its fifty-third[32] and fifty-fourth sessions,[33] and those of the human rights treaty bodies relating to the traffic in women and girls;

5. *Encourages* Member States to conclude bilateral, subregional, regional and international agreements to address the problem of trafficking in women and girls;

6. *Also encourages* Member States to strengthen cooperation through information sharing of experience, best practices and lessons learned through, *inter alia*, consultation mechanisms, such as the regional consultation process organized in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration;

7. *Calls upon* Governments to take appropriate measures to address the root factors, including external factors, that encourage trafficking in women and girls for prostitution and other forms of commercialized sex, forced marriages and forced labour, so as to eliminate trafficking in women, including by strengthening existing legislation with a view to providing better protection of the rights of women and girls and to punishing perpetrators, through both criminal and civil measures;

8. *Calls upon* all Governments to criminalize trafficking in women and girls in all its forms, to condemn and penalize all those offenders involved, including intermediaries, whether their offence was committed in their own or in a foreign country,

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[28] A/53/409.

[29] *World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Stockholm, 27–31 August 1996, Final Report of the Congress*, two volumes (Stockholm, Government of Sweden, January 1997).

[30] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[31] See E/CN.4/Sub.2/1995/28/Add.1.

[32] E/CN.4/1997/47 and Add.1–4.

[33] E/CN.4/1998/54 and Add.1.

while ensuring that the victims of those practices are not penalized, and to penalize persons in authority found guilty of sexually assaulting victims of trafficking in their custody;

9. *Urges* concerned Governments, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, to support and allocate resources for programmes to strengthen preventive action, in particular education and campaigns to increase public awareness of the issue at the national and grass-roots levels;

10. *Encourages* Governments, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, to undertake campaigns aimed at clarifying opportunities, limitations and rights in the event of migration so as to enable women to make informed decisions and to prevent them from becoming victims of trafficking;

11. *Also encourages* Governments to intensify collaboration with non-governmental organizations to develop and implement programmes for effective counselling, training and reintegration into society of victims of trafficking, and programmes that provide shelter and helplines to victims or potential victims;

12. *Invites* Governments to take steps, including witness protection programmes, to enable women who are victims of trafficking to make complaints to the police and to be available when required by the criminal justice system, and to ensure that during this time women have access to social, medical, financial and legal assistance, and protection, as appropriate;

13. *Encourages* Governments to take effective and expeditious measures, particularly the enactment or amendment, if necessary, of domestic legislation, to provide appropriate penalties, such as substantial imprisonment, fines and forfeiture, in order to combat all aspects of organized criminal activities related to trafficking at the international level in women and children;

14. *Invites* Governments to encourage Internet service providers to adopt or strengthen self-regulatory measures to promote the responsible use of the Internet with a view to eliminating trafficking in women and girls;

15. *Encourages* Governments to develop systematic data-collection methods and continuously update information on trafficking in women and girls, including the analysis of the modus operandi of trafficking syndicates;

16. *Urges* Governments to strengthen national programmes to combat trafficking in women and girls through sustained bilateral, regional and international cooperation, taking into account innovative approaches and best practices, and invites Governments, United Nations bodies and organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector to undertake collaborative and joint research and studies on traffic in women and girls that can serve as a basis for policy formulation or change;

17. *Invites* Governments, once again, with the support of the United Nations, to formulate training manuals for law enforcement and medical personnel and judicial officers who handle cases of trafficked women and girls, taking into account current research and materials on traumatic stress and gender-sensitive counselling techniques, with a view to sensitizing them to the special needs of victims;

18. *Invites* States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenants on Human Rights to include information and statistics on trafficking in women and girls as part of their national reports to their respective committees;

19. *Invites* the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of the Commission on Human Rights to continue addressing, within their respective mandates, the problem of trafficking in women and girls as a priority concern, and to recommend, in their reports, measures to combat such phenomena;

20. *Reiterates* its call upon the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in addressing the obstacles to the realization of the human rights of women, in particular through her contacts with the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, to include the traffic in women and girls among her priority concerns;

21. *Welcomes* the initiatives and activities of United Nations bodies and organizations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to combat trafficking in women and girls, and invites them to strengthen their activities in this context;

22. *Encourages* the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality to continue to address the issue as part of the integrated follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to compile, as reference and guidance, successful interventions and strategies in addressing the various dimensions of the problem of trafficking in women and girls based on reports, research and other materials within and outside the United Nations, and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Draft resolution II

Traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 52/99 of 12 December 1997 and other relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights, and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities,

Recalling the reports of the Special Rapporteur of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on traditional practices affecting the health of women and children and of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences,

Reaffirming the obligation of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms as stated in the Charter of the United Nations, also reaffirming the obligations contained in later human rights instruments, in particular article 5 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[34] and

[34] Resolution 34/180, annex.

article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[35] and mindful of article 2, subparagraph (a), of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,[36]

Recalling the provisions of the outcome of the World Conference on Human Rights,[37] the International Conference on Population and Development,[38] the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders[39] and the Fourth World Conference on Women[40] pertaining to traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls,

Reaffirming that such practices constitute a definite form of violence against women and girls and a serious form of violation of their human rights,

Expressing concern at the continuing large-scale existence of such practices,

Stressing that the elimination of such practices requires greater efforts and commitment from Governments, the international community and civil society, including non-governmental and community organizations, and that fundamental changes in societal attitudes are required,

1. *Welcomes*:

(a) The report of the Secretary-General on traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and children,[41] which provides encouraging examples of national best practices and international cooperation;

(b) The efforts undertaken by United Nations bodies, programmes and organizations, including the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, to address the issue of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, and encourages them to continue to coordinate their efforts;

(c) The work carried out by the Special Ambassador for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation of the United Nations Population Fund and the fact that she has been invited to various countries, as well as the establishment, by the United Nations Population Fund, of a trust fund to support her work;

(d) The work carried out by the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children and other non-governmental and community organizations, including women's organizations, in raising awareness of the harmful effects of such practices, in particular of female genital mutilation;

(e) The fact that the Commission on the Status of Women addressed the issue of harmful traditional or customary practices at its session in 1998;

2. *Emphasizes* the need for technical and financial assistance to developing countries working to achieve the elimination of traditional or customary practices affecting

[35] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[36] Resolution 48/104.

[37] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[38] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[39] See A/CONF.169/16, chap. I.

[40] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[41] A/53/354.

the health of women and girls from United Nations funds and programmes, international and regional financial institutions, and bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as the need for assistance to non-governmental organizations and community-based groups active in this field from the international community;

3. *Calls upon* all States:

(a) To ratify, if they have not yet done so, the relevant human rights treaties, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to respect and fully implement their obligations under such treaties to which they are parties;

(b) To implement their international commitments in this field, *inter alia*, under the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights;

(c) To develop and implement national legislation and policies prohibiting traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation, *inter alia*, through appropriate measures against those responsible, and to establish, if they have not done so, a concrete national mechanism for the implementation and monitoring of legislation, law enforcement and national policies;

(d) To intensify efforts to raise awareness of and to mobilize international and national public opinion concerning the harmful effects of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation, in particular through education, information dissemination, training, the media and local community meetings, in order to achieve the total elimination of these practices;

(e) To promote the inclusion of discussion of the empowerment of women and their human rights in primary and secondary education curricula, and to specifically address traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls in such curricula and in the training of health personnel;

(f) To involve, among others, public opinion leaders, educators, religious leaders, chiefs, traditional leaders, medical practitioners, women's health and family planning organizations and the media in publicity campaigns, with a view to promoting a collective and individual awareness of the human rights of women and girls and of how harmful traditional or customary practices violate those rights;

(g) To explore, through consultations with communities and religious and cultural groups and their leaders, alternatives to harmful traditional or customary practices, in particular where those practices form part of a ritual ceremony or rite of passage;

(h) To cooperate closely with the Special Rapporteur of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on traditional practices affecting the health of women and children, and to respond to her inquiries;

(i) To cooperate closely with relevant specialized agencies and United Nations funds and programmes, as well as with relevant non-governmental and community organizations, in a joint effort to eradicate traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls;

(j) To include in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other relevant treaty bodies specific information on measures taken to eliminate traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation;

(k) To address the issue of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls in their national evaluations of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

(l) To include specific information on measures taken to eliminate traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation, in the reports they submit on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action to the Secretariat in preparation for the high-level plenary review to appraise and assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the Platform for Action, to be convened by the General Assembly in the year 2000;

4. *Invites*:

(a) Relevant specialized agencies, United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations to exchange information on the subject of the present resolution, and encourages the exchange of such information between non-governmental organizations active in this field and the bodies monitoring the implementation of relevant human rights treaties;

(b) The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-third session, to address the subject of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation, during its review of the critical area of concern "Women and health";

(c) The Commission on Human Rights to address this subject at its fifty-fifth session, thus allowing a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of these practices on women's human rights;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To make his report available to relevant meetings within the United Nations system;

(b) To include information on the subject of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls in the compilation of updated statistics and indicators on the situation of women and girls around the world, which he is requested to provide by the end of 1999, by issuing, for example, a volume of *The World's Women*;

(c) To make available to the Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-fifth session, the outcome of the discussions in the Commission on the Status of Women on this issue, if necessary in the form of an oral report;

(d) To report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution, with a special focus on recent national and international developments.

Draft resolution III

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 51/68 of 12 December 1996,

Bearing in mind that one of the purposes of the United Nations, as stated in Articles 1 and 55 of the Charter, is to promote universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind, including distinction as to sex,

Affirming that women and men should participate equally in social, economic and political development, should contribute equally to such development and should share equally in improved conditions of life,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[42] in which the Conference reaffirmed that the human rights of women and the girl child were an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights,

Welcoming the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fortieth,[43] forty-first[44] and forty-second[45] sessions regarding the implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action,[46] agreed conclusions 1997/2 of the Economic and Social Council[47] on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, and Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/26 of 28 July 1998, entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development",

Also welcoming the growing number of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[48] which now stands at one hundred and sixty-two,

Taking note of the elaboration and adoption by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, at its sixteenth session, of general recommendation 23 on women in public life,[49]

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its eighteenth and nineteenth sessions,[50]

Expressing concern at the great number of reports overdue and that continue to be overdue, in particular initial reports, which constitute an obstacle to the full implementation of the Convention,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General[51] on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

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[42] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[43] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 6* (E/1996/26), chap. I, sect. C.1.

[44] Ibid., *1997, Supplement No. 7* (E/1997/27), chap. I, sect. C.1.

[45] Ibid., *1998, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/1998/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution IV.

[46] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[47] A/52/3, chap. IV, sect. A.

[48] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[49] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/52/38/Rev.1).

[50] Ibid., *Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1).

[51] A/53/318.

2. *Urges* all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible, so that universal ratification of the Convention can be achieved by the year 2000;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of full compliance by States parties with their obligations under the Convention;

4. *Urges* States to limit the extent of any reservations they lodge to the Convention, to formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible, to ensure that no reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention or otherwise incompatible with international treaty law, to review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them, and to withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention or that are otherwise incompatible with international treaty law;

5. *Invites* States parties to the Convention to give due consideration to the statement regarding reservations to the Convention adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women[52] to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;[53]

6. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretariat on reservations to the Convention;[54]

7. *Urges* States parties to the Convention to make all possible efforts to submit their reports on the implementation of the Convention in accordance with article 18 thereof and with the guidelines provided by the Committee, and to cooperate fully with the Committee in the presentation of their reports;

8. *Encourages* the Secretariat to extend technical assistance to States parties, upon their request, in the preparation of reports, in particular initial reports, and invites Governments to contribute to those efforts;

9. *Commends* the Committee on its efforts to contribute to the effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

10. *Commends* the Committee for reducing the backlog of reports, *inter alia*, through improved internal methods of work, and notes the efforts of the Committee to continue improving its internal methods of work;

11. *Urges* States parties to the Convention to take appropriate measures so that acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention by a two-thirds majority of States parties can be reached as soon as possible so that the amendment may enter into force;

12. *Expresses its appreciation* for the additional meeting time allowing the Committee to hold two sessions annually, each of three weeks' duration, preceded by a pre-session working group of the Committee;

13. *Emphasizes* the need to ensure adequate financing and staff support for the effective functioning of the Committee, including for the dissemination of information;

14. *Welcomes* the progress made by the Open-ended Working Group of the Commission on the Status of Women on the Elaboration of a Draft Optional Protocol to

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[52] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1), part two, chap. I, sect. A.

[53] Resolution 217 A (III).

[54] CEDAW/C/1997/4.

the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and encourages the Working Group to continue its work with a view to completing it at the forty-third session of the Commission;

15. *Encourages* the strengthening of coordination between the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the other human rights treaty bodies, and encourages the human rights treaty bodies to coordinate their activities in monitoring the implementation of human rights instruments for the full enjoyment by women of their human rights;

16. *Invites* the Committee to draw up joint general comments with other treaty bodies, within their respective mandates, on the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights, and invites the persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, at their annual meetings, to explore ways and means to facilitate those activities;

17. *Stresses* that a comprehensive and integrated approach to the promotion and protection of the human rights of women, including the integration of the human rights of women into the mainstream of United Nations system-wide activities, requires systematic, increased and sustained attention to and implementation of the general recommendations of the Committee, at the request of the General Assembly, throughout the United Nations system;

18. *Welcomes* the submission of reports by specialized agencies, at the invitation of the Committee, on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in areas falling within the scope of their activities, and the contribution of non-governmental organizations to the work of the Committee;

19. *Commends* the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and others for building women's capacity to understand and use human rights instruments, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session a report on the status of the Convention and the implementation of the present resolution, under the appropriate agenda item.

Draft resolution IV

Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat

The General Assembly,

Recalling Articles 1 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as Article 8, which provides that the United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs,

Recalling also the goal, contained in the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women,[55] of the achievement of overall gender equality, particularly at the Professional level and above, by the year 2000,

[55] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

Recalling further its resolution 52/96 of 12 December 1997 on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat,

Welcoming the progress made in improving the representation of women at the D-1 level and above, in particular the achievement of the interim goal set in its resolution 45/239 C of 21 December 1990 of a 25 per cent participation rate of women in posts at the D-1 level and above, but concerned that the representation of women at those levels remains significantly low,

Concerned at the incremental pace at which the overall representation of women in the Secretariat has increased, and at the decline in the percentages of women promoted to the P-5 level and appointed at the P-5 level,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General and the recommendations contained therein,[56] takes note of the statement on gender equality and mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations system adopted by the Administrative Committee on Coordination in March 1998,[57] and requests the Secretary-General to report in 2000 to the Commission on the Status of Women, in its capacity as the preparatory committee for the high-level plenary review to appraise and assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the Beijing Platform for Action, to be convened by the General Assembly in the year 2000, on progress made to achieve the goals outlined in the statement;

2. *Reaffirms* the goal of 50/50 gender distribution by the year 2000 in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at the D-1 level and above, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation or under-representation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition;

3. *Welcomes* the ongoing personal commitment of the Secretary-General to meeting the goal of gender equality and his assurance that gender balance will be given the highest priority in his continuing efforts to bring about a new management culture in the Organization, which will include full implementation of the special measures outlined in his report;

4. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to implement fully and monitor the strategic plan of action for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (1995–2000)[58] in order to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution by the year 2000, especially at the D-1 level and above;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that individual managers are held accountable for implementing the strategic plan within their areas of responsibility;

6. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys and to pursue good offices on his behalf, especially in matters related to peacekeeping, peace-building, preventive diplomacy and economic and social development, and in operational activities, including resident coordinators, as well as to appoint more women to other high-level positions;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that heads of departments and offices develop gender action plans that establish concrete strategies for the achievement of gender

[56] A/53/376.

[57] ACC/1998/4, para. 63.

[58] A/49/587 and Corr.1, sect. IV.

balance in individual departments and offices, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution and in conformity with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, so as to ensure, as far as possible, that the appointment and promotion of women will be not less than 50 per cent until the goal of 50/50 gender distribution is met;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue his work to create a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including through the development of policies for flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements, childcare and elder care needs, as well as through the expansion of gender-sensitivity training in all departments and offices;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to further develop the policy against harassment, including sexual harassment, and to issue detailed guidelines, based on the results of the comprehensive inter-agency survey;

10. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to enable the Focal Point for Women in the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to effectively monitor and facilitate progress in the implementation of the strategic plan, including by ensuring access to the information required to carry out that work;

11. *Strongly encourages* Member States to support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at the D-1 level and above, by identifying and regularly submitting more women candidates for appointment to intergovernmental, judicial and expert bodies and encouraging more women to apply for positions within the Secretariat, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and the regional commissions, including in areas in which women are under-represented, such as peacekeeping, peace-building and other non-traditional areas;

12. *Also strongly encourages* Member States to identify women candidates for assignment to peacekeeping missions, and to improve the representation of women in military and civilian police contingents;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution, including by providing statistics on the number and percentage of women in all organizational units and at all levels throughout the United Nations system and on the implementation of gender action plans, to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-third session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.